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## Delhi polls 2015: BJP doesn't have digital edge like in other states

Jan 24, 2015, 06.53AM IST

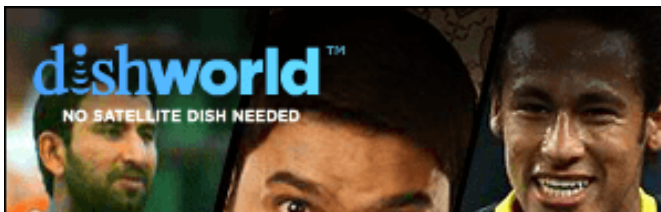
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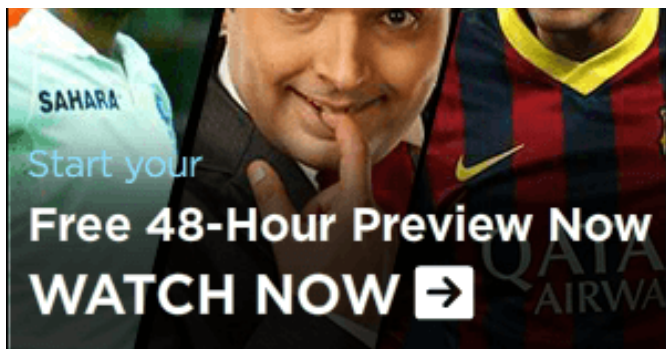
**By Sanjay Kumar, Shreyas Sardesai and Pranav Gupta**

NEW DELHI: A smaller number of electorate and high spatial concentration make campaign organisation in Delhi very different from that in the other states. While traditional campaign activities continue to hold importance, increasing penetration of mainstream media and social media is redefining the way parties and candidates organise their election campaign. Media penetration not only increases access to information before voting but also changes the impact of traditional activities like road shows and rallies.



(Surveys conducted by the...)





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Surveys conducted by the Centre for the Society of Developing Societies (CSDS) reveal that almost four-fifths (78%) of Delhi voters watch news on television daily.

About half (48%) of the voters read a newspaper daily. Close to three out of every ten voters (28%) in the city use Facebook. Twitter, on the other hand, has much less penetration at about one in ten (11%).

In contrast to its position in most other states, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Delhi enjoys no major advantage over opponents among those who have a high exposure to media.

In the [Lok Sabha election](#) specifically, the party performed best among those who had very low or no media exposure. The gap between the [Aam Aadmi Party](#) (AAP) and the [BJP](#) was least among those with high media exposure in the previous assembly election.

AAP's vote share among those with high media exposure has always been much greater than its average vote share. Voting for the [Congress](#) seems to have a clear negative relationship with media exposure as the party fares poorly among those with high media exposure (see table 1).

A similar trend follows when we disaggregate further and study each media platform separately. In the Lok Sabha election, the gap between the BJP and [AAP](#) among those who rarely or never watch news on

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television was 27 percentage points, compared to 13 points among those who watch it daily. The frequency of accessing news on the internet doesn't determine likelihood of voting for the BJP.

On the other hand, AAP receives higher support among those who use the internet daily. Newspaper readership doesn't have a clear pattern; the BJP maintains an advantage among daily readers while there was reversal in the trend for AAP in the Lok Sabha election (see table 2).

## Fight for Digital Space

### USE OF VARIOUS FORMS OF MEDIA & VOTING PATTERN

|                     |              |    | Assembly Election 2013 |    |    | Lok Sabha Election 2014 |    |    |
|---------------------|--------------|----|------------------------|----|----|-------------------------|----|----|
|                     |              |    | In Percent             |    |    |                         |    |    |
| Watching news on TV | Daily        | 78 | 23                     | 35 | 31 | 15                      | 46 | 33 |
|                     | Rarely/Never | 8  | 29                     | 29 | 25 | 15                      | 54 | 27 |
| Reading Newspaper   | Daily        | 48 | 20                     | 37 | 32 | 14                      | 54 | 30 |
|                     | Rarely/Never | 29 | 31                     | 32 | 25 | 15                      | 45 | 34 |
| News on Internet    | Daily        | 24 | 19                     | 34 | 37 | 10                      | 45 | 37 |
|                     | Rarely/Never | 58 | 27                     | 34 | 26 | 17                      | 46 | 32 |



### VOTING BEHAVIOUR BY LEVEL OF MEDIA EXPOSURE

|                       |  |  | 2013 Assembly Election |     |     | 2014 Lok Sabha Election |     |     |
|-----------------------|--|--|------------------------|-----|-----|-------------------------|-----|-----|
|                       |  |  | Cong                   | BJP | AAP | Cong                    | BJP | AAP |
| Very Low/ No Exposure |  |  | 33                     | 34  | 18  | 15                      | 51  | 28  |
| Low Exposure          |  |  | 30                     | 31  | 27  | 18                      | 39  | 38  |
| Moderate Exposure     |  |  | 25                     | 33  | 29  | 14                      | 50  | 30  |
| High Exposure         |  |  | 18                     | 37  | 35  | 12                      | 45  | 37  |

### SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE AND VOTING BEHAVIOUR

|          |             |            | Assembly polls 2013 |     |     |
|----------|-------------|------------|---------------------|-----|-----|
|          |             | In Percent | Cong                | BJP | AAP |
| Facebook | Users       | 28         | 20                  | 35  | 35  |
|          | Non - Users | 72         | 26                  | 34  | 27  |
| Twitter  | Users       | 11         | 16                  | 28  | 34  |
|          | Non - Users | 89         | 26                  | 34  | 29  |

### VOTING BEHAVIOUR BY AGE

|                |  |  | 2013 Assembly Election |     |     | 2014 Lok Sabha Election |     |     |
|----------------|--|--|------------------------|-----|-----|-------------------------|-----|-----|
|                |  |  | Cong                   | BJP | AAP | Cong                    | BJP | AAP |
| Up to 25 Years |  |  | 18                     | 32  | 36  | 11                      | 43  | 40  |
| 26 - 35 Years  |  |  | 25                     | 34  | 29  | 16                      | 44  | 36  |
| 36 - 45 Years  |  |  | 27                     | 32  | 32  | 15                      | 47  | 33  |
| 46 - 55 Years  |  |  | 24                     | 37  | 28  | 18                      | 47  | 31  |
| 56 and above   |  |  | 28                     | 37  | 23  | 17                      | 53  | 21  |

All figures are In percent

Source: Election Surveys conducted by CSDS in Delhi

In 2013, AAP and BJP drew equal support among voters who use Facebook and AAP, in fact, led among

Twitter users. Owing to its lower class support base and minimal presence on social media, the Congress has a clear disadvantage in terms of social media use (see table 3).

The heavy focus of AAP and the BJP on running a sophisticated campaign is probably explained by the profile of the user base. Digital campaign could play a crucial role in attracting young voters who are now emerging as a distinct political constituency in Delhi's politics.

Social media use and access to mainstream media are higher among the youth who have now started voting differently from older voters.

Again contrary to the national pattern, the BJP is weaker among younger voters in Delhi. In the previous assembly election, AAP had managed to take a narrow lead over the BJP among voters aged below 25. Even in the Lok Sabha election, the gap between the two parties was lowest among young voters (see table 4).

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Despite the emergence of these new spaces for campaigning, the traditional activities like public meetings and road shows continue to hold greater importance. The digital campaign might help in building a positive perception for a party. But for converting this perception into votes, it is important for parties to have active booth level workers who are able to mobilise their supporters on polling day. The BJP has been organising multiple meetings of its booth level workers and panna prabharis (those in charge of a page each of electoral rolls and responsible for about 50 voters) and AAP has been trying to recreate the volunteer network which had helped it in door-to-door campaigning last time.

With close to a quarter of the voters deciding whom to vote for just a few days before polling or on the day of polling, it is crucial for parties to ensure that they continue to dominate the electoral discourse in the next ten days. In a highly televised election like Delhi's, each move by a party and statements made by leaders would reach voters and hold potential of influencing the mind of the voters.

Multiple invitations by Arvind Kejriwal for a televised debate between the CM candidates and the string of interviews given by Kiran Bedi in the past week reassert the significance of media in this election.

*(Sanjay Kumar is Director, CSDS. Shreyas Sardesai is a research associate and Pranav Gupta is a researcher at Lokniti Research Programme)*



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**Manik Barbhuiya** (India)

24 Jan, 2015 09:22 PM

It looks like that.

**I K Singh** (Bilaspur)

24 Jan, 2015 08:10 PM

The gap between the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the BJP was least among those with high media exposure in the AAP's vote share among those with high media exposure has always been much greater than its average vote sha

**ss** (Bangalore)

24 Jan, 2015 05:13 PM

This khujliwall is nothing but another paap of the romman mattaji sonniya whose only intention is to give back door dammadd robber vaddra to swindle the aam,, aadmi of the cappitall as they did in haryana and rajasthan with help

**sanjay chow** (Delhi)

24 Jan, 2015 04:17 PM

Dear AK, you are a good man with good agenda for the people of Delhi !! 90% of the battle is won ..... now go out & Looters !!! ..... "Dhakka maar aur karde Choron ko Dilli se Bahaar !!! :-)

**sanjay chow** (Delhi)

24 Jan, 2015 04:12 PM

Dear Motu, Lair No 1, you and your No 2 Looter Corrupt Party are in power only because all indians are sick of Mrs I people of Delhi understand your sick communal and negative agenda. Ramzade / Riots / 4 Children / No Jeans are language "Ghar Wapsi" means ..... go back to Gujarat !! That is certain !! :-)